



U.S. Department of Energy
Office of Inspector General
Office of Audit Services

Audit Report

The Department of Energy's
American Recovery and
Reinvestment Act - Florida State
Energy Program



OAS-RA-10-12

June 2010



Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

June 7, 2010

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY

FROM: 
Gregory H. Friedman
Inspector General

SUBJECT: INFORMATION: Audit Report on "The Department of Energy's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act – Florida State Energy Program"

BACKGROUND

The Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) provides grants to states, territories, and the District of Columbia to support their energy priorities through the State Energy Program (SEP). The SEP provides Federal financial assistance to carry out energy efficiency and renewable energy projects that meet each state's unique energy needs while also addressing national goals such as energy security. Federal funding is based on a grant formula that takes into account population and energy consumption. The SEP emphasizes the state's role as the decision maker and administrator for the program.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act) expanded the SEP, authorizing \$3.1 billion in grants. Based on existing grant formulas and after reviewing state-level plans, EERE made awards to states. The State of Florida's Energy Office (Florida) was allocated \$126 million – a 90-fold increase over Florida's average annual SEP grant of \$1.4 million. Per the Recovery Act, this funding must be obligated by September 30, 2010, and spent by April 30, 2012. As of March 10, 2010, Florida had expended \$13.2 million of the SEP Recovery Act funds. Florida planned to use its grant funds to undertake activities that would preserve and create jobs; save energy; increase renewable energy sources; and, reduce greenhouse gas emissions. To accomplish Recovery Act objectives, states could either fund new or expand existing projects. As a condition of the awards, EERE required states to develop and implement sound internal controls over the use of Recovery Act funds.

Based on the significant increase in funding from the Recovery Act, we initiated this review to determine whether Florida had internal controls in place to provide assurance that the goals of the SEP and Recovery Act will be met and accomplished efficiently and effectively.

RESULTS OF AUDIT

We identified weaknesses in the implementation of SEP Recovery Act projects that have adversely impacted Florida's ability to meet the goals of the SEP and the Recovery Act. Specifically:

- Florida used about \$8.3 million to pay for activities that did not meet the intent of the Recovery Act to create new or save existing jobs. With the approval of the Department,

Florida used these funds to pay for rebates related to solar energy projects that had been completed prior to passage of the Recovery Act;

- State officials did not meet Florida's program goals to obligate all Recovery Act funds by January 1, 2010, thus delaying projects and preventing them from achieving the desired stimulative economic impact. Obligations were delayed because Florida officials selected a number of projects that either required a lengthy review and approval process or were specifically prohibited. In June 2009, the Department notified Florida that a number of projects would not be approved; however, as of April 1, 2010, the State had not acted to name replacement projects or move funds to other projects;
- Florida officials had not ensured that 7 of the 18 award requirements for Recovery Act funding promulgated by the Department had been passed down to sub-recipients of the award, as required; and,
- Certain internal control weaknesses that could jeopardize the program and increase the risk of fraud, waste and abuse were identified in the Solar Energy System Incentives Program during our September 2009 visit to Florida. These included a lack of separation of duties related to the processing of rebates and deficiencies in the written procedures for grant managers to review and approve rebates.

From a forward looking perspective, absent aggressive corrective action, these weaknesses threaten Florida's efforts to meet future Recovery Act goals. In response to our review, Florida took corrective action to incorporate the additional award requirements in sub-recipient documents. It also instituted additional controls to correct the internal control weaknesses we identified. More, however, needs to be done with respect to Department oversight. This report details the circumstances surrounding these program issues and outlines actions that, in our opinion, will help Florida achieve its SEP Recovery Act-funded goals.

Solar Energy System Incentives Program

We found that Florida used Recovery Act funds to pay for rebates under a program that was in place prior to the passage of the Recovery Act, and, as such, did not satisfy the Recovery Act requirement of creating or saving jobs. In 2006, Florida's Solar Energy System Incentives Program was created to provide a rebate for the installation of residential and commercial solar energy systems through June 30, 2010. Rebates were paid through a rebate request process on a first-come, first-served basis with unpaid rebates given priority when funds were received in the following year. This program had been funded by Florida using State funds since its inception but, in 2008, an overwhelming response to the program exhausted the State's 2008 funding and created a backlog of rebate requests.

The Department subsequently approved the use of SEP Recovery Act funds to continue this program. This included paying the backlog of rebates, some of which had been pending since March 2008, and funding additional rebates for this program. In August 2009, Florida began processing the \$8.3 million backlog of rebates which had been pending prior to the passage of the Recovery Act. In our view, the use of Recovery Act funding in this way is inappropriate in that it

did not advance the underlying purpose of the Recovery Act, that is, to create or save jobs. Clearly, the solar energy system installations covered by the backlog of rebate requests, as important as they may have been at the time, had been performed prior to the passage of the Recovery Act.

Project Selection

Florida has been unable to fully execute its SEP Recovery Act Plan, as intended. Specifically, Florida proposed 10 Recovery Act projects in May 2009, and planned to obligate most of its funds by January 1, 2010. Prior to approval, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires that agencies consider the potential environmental impacts of proposed projects, including SEP Recovery Act projects. A number of the projects proposed by Florida either required a lengthy NEPA review or were specifically prohibited under SEP. To compensate for problems with initial project selection, Florida has had to change its plans to avoid delays associated with the NEPA approval process and to replace planned projects that are specifically prohibited. These changes have resulted in Florida missing its planned January 1, 2010, date for obligating most of its Recovery Act funds. Both State officials and EERE management assert that although Florida had not met its goals to obligate funds by the planned January 1, 2010, date, it is on track to meet the Department's goals that were established in February 2010 to obligate 30 percent by March 31, 2010, and 80 percent by June 30, 2010.

As of April 1, 2010, Florida has yet to finalize its plans and as such has not received approval for all of its projects under NEPA. Specifically, in June 2009, the Department notified Florida that 4 of the 10 proposed projects were not approved under NEPA. After it was notified, Florida decided to scope down or modify the projects in an attempt to get them approved. Florida has since received NEPA approval for one of these projects and two others have been conditionally approved – needing further approval once the projects are fully developed. The remaining project has yet to receive approval.

Notably, one of Florida's proposed projects, Shovel Ready Grants, has yet to be fully executed. This project consists of nine separate sub-grants that could, in theory, be started quickly. However, the Department indicated that two of these nine sub-grants proposed by Florida were specifically prohibited under SEP regulations. Additionally, two sub-grants were cancelled after NEPA concerns were identified, and one continues to undergo NEPA scrutiny. The other four sub-grants, worth \$7.4 million, have been approved and funded. Even though Florida submitted these proposed sub-grants in its initial plan in May 2009, and was notified of the prohibition by the Department shortly thereafter, as of October 2009, Florida still had not reconsidered changing how it would use the funds. As of April 1, 2010, Florida still has not redeployed \$12.1 million in funds reserved for five of these "shovel ready" sub-grants and was still considering its options on those sub-grants.

As of April 1, 2010, Florida had changed its plan from 10 projects to 9 by combining 2 projects involving loan programs into one. If it successfully executes its current plan, Florida will have \$67 million obligated by April 2010, with the remaining funds obligated by the Recovery Act's September 30, 2010, deadline. It plans to spend most of the SEP funds by June 30, 2011.

Flow-Down Requirements

The SEP Recovery Act grant mandates that 18 requirements be passed down to program sub-recipients. These requirements, which are critically important to ensure accountability and transparency, are designed to help prevent or detect, in a timely manner, problems in the administration or execution of SEP projects. However, our review of Recovery Act flow-down requirements found that the following requirements were not included in Florida sub-recipient agreement documents:

- Authorized representatives of the Department must be provided access to facilities, resources, or persons, as necessary;
- Sub-grantees or bidders are prohibited from entering into agreements with labor organizations;
- Revenues, obligations, and expenditures related to Recovery Act funding must be segregated;
- Recovery Act funds may not be used for any casino, gambling establishment, aquarium, zoo, golf course, or swimming pool;
- Whistleblowers must be protected;
- Recipient and sub-recipients shall promptly refer to the Department or other appropriate Inspector General any credible evidence that a false claim has been submitted under the False Claims Act; and,
- Recipients of Recovery Act funds must use American iron, steel, and manufactured goods, where appropriate.

After we notified Florida of these discrepancies, it took corrective action and modified its sub-recipient documents to include these requirements.

Internal Control Weaknesses

During our review of the Solar Energy System Incentives Program, we also identified other internal control weaknesses. Specifically, an administrative staff member was performing multiple duties, including receiving the rebate forms, recording the rebates, approving the rebates for payment, and mailing the rebate checks. These duties should have been separated and performed by different individuals to minimize the possibility of theft. In addition, there were no written requirements for grant managers to review or approve the rebates prior to payment authorization. Since the time of our review, Florida told us that it had instituted additional controls to correct these weaknesses.

Departmental Monitoring

The deficiencies discussed in this report occurred, at least in part, due to insufficient Departmental monitoring. Specifically, the Department has not ensured that all of Florida's planned activities will save or create jobs and that all targeted projects could be started expeditiously in accordance with the Recovery Act. In addition, the Department is required to perform monitoring of each state's SEP activities annually; however, in the case of Florida, it had not performed on-site monitoring visits since the passage of the Recovery Act. As a result, the Department was unable to detect the deficiencies that have occurred in Florida's contract flow-down provisions and rebate processing controls.

The Department has not ensured that all projects chosen for SEP will create or save jobs. Specifically, the Department's project officer told us that he did not verify the exact amount of the backlog during his review of the Solar Energy System Incentives Program. Otherwise he would have known that all of the Recovery Act funds were going to pay the \$8.3 million backlog.

When asked about the backlog of rebates, the project officer said that his initial assumptions were that the funds were only going to pay a small portion to the backlog but the majority of funds would be used for expansion of the program and payment of new rebate requests. Had the project officer requested details regarding the backlog he would have found that none of the funds would be used for new rebate requests. Florida has since increased the funds for this program to \$14.4 million, paying all of the backlog and new rebates that have been submitted since the passage of the Recovery Act.

Even though the Department provided oversight and guidance to Florida on its projects, it allowed 10 months to pass while Florida finalizes its SEP Recovery Act Plan. In May 2009, Florida submitted its plan to the Department. In October 2009, the Department's project officer, while performing desk monitoring, pointed out that certain Florida projects were not viable and suggested that Florida direct its Recovery Act funds to alternative projects. However, as of April 1, 2010, Florida had not made that change. Florida attributed the delays to the NEPA process and to State approval requirements for grants. Given the pressing economic needs and unemployment situations, the Recovery Act gave a preference to activities that could be started expeditiously. While the Department has encouraged the use of "shovel ready" activities, such activities are not always viable. Thus, ongoing monitoring by the Department is necessary to ensure that alternatives can be quickly selected and implemented.

Timely monitoring by the Department could have discovered the deficiencies in Florida's contract flow-down provisions and rebate processing controls. For example, Florida assumed that it had added sufficient language in its contract clauses to address each of the 18 Recovery Act requirements. According to Florida officials, it was not until our review that Florida discovered that there were deficiencies. No reviews had been performed by the Department that would identify the discrepancies in flow-down requirements and internal control weaknesses we discovered.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To address the problems outlined in our report, we recommend that the Assistant Secretary, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy ensure that:

1. Project officers work closely with states that propose projects that may be delayed due to NEPA or noncompliance with regulations, to pursue other viable alternatives;
2. Projects selected are meeting the Recovery Act requirement to create or save jobs;
3. Flow-down requirements are properly addressed in sub-recipient award documents; and,
4. Appropriate internal controls and procedures are in place to prevent inappropriate expenditures of Recovery Act funding.

MANAGEMENT COMMENTS

Management concurred with each of the recommendations. EERE and the Project Management Center stated that they continue to complete actions to better manage Recovery Act requirements. Specifically, EERE stated that it has taken action to (1) work closely with states to accelerate NEPA determinations while developing contingency plans for alternative projects that can be implemented quickly; (2) communicate with State Energy Offices to ensure state officials understand that the Recovery Act has job creation as a primary objective and give preference to activities that can be started and completed expeditiously; (3) instruct project officers to monitor whether flow-down requirements are properly addressed in sub-recipient award documents; and, (4) ensure appropriate, effective use of SEP Recovery Act funds by performing visits to all states, revising reporting requirements, expanding monitoring, issuing program guidance, and putting communication and data collection and reporting systems in place. Management's comments are included in their entirety in Attachment 2.

Comments submitted by the State of Florida are included as Attachment 3.

AUDITOR RESPONSE

Management's comments are responsive to the recommendations.

cc: Deputy Secretary
Under Secretary of Energy
Assistant Secretary, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, EE-1
Chief of Staff
Director, Office of Risk Management, CF-80
Team Leader, Office of Risk Management, CF-80
Audit Resolution Specialist, Office of Risk Management, CF-80
Audit Liaison, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, EE-3A
Audit Liaison, National Energy Technology Laboratory

OBJECTIVE, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this audit was to determine whether the State of Florida's Energy Office had internal controls in place to provide assurance that the goals of the State Energy Program (SEP) and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act) will be met and accomplished efficiently and effectively.

SCOPE

The audit was performed from August 2009 to April 2010, at the Florida Energy & Climate Commission in Tallahassee, Florida. We also obtained information from the National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL) in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The audit scope was limited to Florida's SEP.

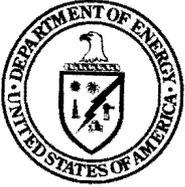
METHODOLOGY

To accomplish the audit objective, we:

- Reviewed Federal regulations and Department of Energy (Department) guidance related to the SEP and Recovery Act;
- Reviewed State legislation related to the SEP in Florida;
- Reviewed Florida's SEP annual plan for Recovery Act funds;
- Reviewed Florida's grantee documents for recipients of Recovery Act funds;
- Held discussions with Florida Energy & Climate Commission personnel; and,
- Held discussions with program officials from NETL.

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objective. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objective. Because our review was limited, it would not necessarily have disclosed all internal control deficiencies that may have existed at the time of our audit. Finally, we did not rely on computer-processed data to accomplish our audit objective.

We briefed Florida officials on April 9, 2010, and Department officials at NETL and Washington, D.C. on April 12, 2010. An exit conference was held with Department officials on June 1, 2010.



Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

MAY 14 2010

MEMORANDUM FOR: George Collard
Assistant Inspector General
for Performance Audits

FROM: Kathleen B. Hogan 
Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Energy Efficiency
Office of Technology Development
Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

SUBJECT: Response to the Office of Inspector General Draft Report on
"Audit of the Department of Energy's American
Recovery and Reinvestment Act - Florida State Energy Program"

The Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) appreciates the opportunity to review the Office of Inspector General's (IG) draft audit report "Audit of the Department of Energy's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act - Florida State Energy Program."

We concur with the recommendations as stated. EERE and the PMC will continue to oversee that the actions described by the Florida Governor's Energy Office are followed by regular on-site visits, desk monitoring and frequent communication. We will continue to work with Florida to ensure their ARRA SEP programs and projects are successful.

Should you have any questions, please contact Mark Bailey at 202-586-9424.



Draft Response to Inspector General Audit Report:
"Audit of the Department of Energy's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act - Florida State
Energy Program."

Recommendation 1

Project officers work closely with states that propose projects that may be delayed due to NEPA or noncompliance with regulations, to pursue other viable alternatives;

Response

Concur

Florida established the target date of January 1, 2010, by which it intended to have 100% of the funds obligated. However, by not initially limiting projects to those that could be categorically excluded under NEPA, that target date was overly aggressive. Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) Headquarters and Project Management Center (PMC) staffs continue to work closely with states to accelerate National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) determinations while developing contingency plans for alternative projects that can be implemented quickly. The NEPA determination rate for state projects has increased dramatically due to increased staff and contractors assigned to our NEPA review team. [No SWAT team resources have been devoted to Florida as to NEPA issues.]

Since Florida's initial Recovery Act application submission, National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL) Staff and the State Energy Office (SEO) have been diligent in addressing NEPA and other hurdles to project implementation. Over 50% of the Florida projects have a NEPA Categorical Exclusion (CX) meaning that the state has no NEPA conditions on over 50% of their money. The Recovery Act brought a scale of funding not previously encountered by any state energy program. The State of Florida was one of the first states to propose programs related to biofuel production (under the Shovel Ready Grants market title) in the Southeast U.S. Florida SEO's close contact with the project officer and the NEPA compliance officer in addressing the biofuel project approvals informed the development of an efficient and effective NEPA review and approval process for all State applications. EERE saw that it was necessary to augment DOE resources to address the immediate and surge requirements. The State of Florida, the project officer, and these additional DOE experts available to Federal and state personnel worked collaboratively to address concerns, including: Federal regulatory review, the Florida internal approval processes (Florida Energy & Climate Commission) grant sub-recipient and stakeholder interests. [There were no additional NEPA staff devoted to Florida; the issues listed above are unrelated to NEPA. Funds can be obligated by the state with NEPA conditions -- and the state is still pursuing projects that require EAs or EISs. The problems Florida experienced were mostly unrelated to NEPA.]

With this collaborative approach, the team has been able to address and manage the Florida SEO projects and learn how to revise projects to better meet Recovery Act requirements. As part of the EERE requirements for a rigorous monitoring process, the project officer also facilitates weekly project update calls with Florida and all other assigned states to monitor performance and provide assistance as needed. The Department has sent all states a letter with suggested program area, e.g. appliance rebates, that funding could be transferred to if NEPA review prohibits a selected project.

Estimated Completion Date: Ongoing and continuous.

Recommendation 2

Projects selected are meeting the Recovery Act requirement to create or save jobs;

Response

Concur

Section 3 (a) of the Recovery Act states: “The purposes of this Act include the following: (1) To preserve and create jobs and promote economic recovery...” To meet this objective, the DOE continuously interacts with State Energy Offices via weekly calls by project officers, frequent calls by Senior Management to ensure SEO’s have the tools needed to cost their money, Senior Management visits, through program guidance and through communication tools to ensure state officials understand that the Recovery Act has job creation as a primary objective and gives preference to activities that can be started and completed expeditiously. To address the Act’s objectives, DOE gave preference to projects that quickly enhanced job creation, job preservation and economic recovery. SEP Program Notice 09-01, the 2009 SEP Formula Grant Guidance for ARRA and Regular Appropriations, all strongly encourage the states to allocate their Recovery Act funds to projects and programs with a high potential for job creation and energy savings. DOE’s SEP project officers continue to work with the states to assist them in implementing high impact programs so that Recovery Act funds are used effectively as well as expeditiously.

With regard to the instant audit finding and recommendation, the Department concurs that we need continuous oversight rigor to ensure that projects funded via the Recovery Act meet the purposes of the Act. To ensure that proper rigor is observed, EERE WIP has produced a Monitoring Plan and Guidance Manual, which, along with related monitoring checklists, details the precision expected from Federal staff responsible for administering Recovery Act funds.

The State Energy Program guidance and Monitoring plan can be accessed at www1.eere.energy.gov/wip/guidance.html and www.1.eere.energy.gov/wip/pdfs/monitoring_plan.pdf

Estimated Completion Date: Completed

Recommendation 3

Flow-down requirements are properly addressed in sub-recipient award documents

Response

Concur

The objectives of our monitoring program include providing quality assurance in the administration of grants for the State Energy Program. The DOE project officers have already begun weekly, monthly and quarterly desktop monitoring of their assigned state energy offices. Project officers have been instructed to monitor whether flow-down requirements are properly addressed in sub-recipient award documents. EERE and PMC staffs are scheduled to begin on-site monitoring on May 24, 2010 for the State of Florida Energy Office Recovery Act projects. EERE will notify each of the Project Management Centers of these findings and take necessary actions to ensure that States are fully aware of the flow-down requirements. These actions will include both a written reminder to each State and compliance reminder during the PMC Project Officer's weekly grantee calls.

Estimated Completion Date: Completed and ongoing

Recommendation 4

Appropriate internal controls and procedures are in place to prevent inappropriate expenditures of Recovery Act funding.

Response

Concur

Even before final passage of the Recovery Act, DOE began to assess and strengthen the internal controls and review procedures that would apply to those funds. Senior Management performed "preparedness visits" to all states to work with states to ensure that they were ready to manage and execute on greatly increased program funding. Reporting requirements have been revised to gather additional information from the states more frequently. Monitoring procedures and frequency have been significantly expanded as well. Additional SEP project officers, field liaisons and monitoring personnel have been brought on board at HQ and the PMC, to enable DOE to work more closely with individual states. These measures, along with robust Program guidance, communication and data collection and reporting systems and structures have been put in place to ensure appropriate, effective use of SEP Recovery Act funds. We will continue to assess and strengthen our internal controls as well as the states management controls as necessary.

Estimated Completion Date: Completed and ongoing

May 12, 2010

Mr. Rickey R. Hass
Deputy Inspector General for Audit Services
Department of Energy Office of Inspector General
Washington, DC 20585

RE: Comments on draft report, "Audit of the Department of Energy's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) – Florida State Energy Program". **(508 VERSION NO SIGNATURE)**

Dear Mr. Hass:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and provide comment on the accuracy and completeness of the information contained in the above referenced draft report. In response to the program issues outlined, please consider the following information.

Solar Energy System Incentives Program

- Since 2007, the Solar Rebate Program has been a Department-approved measure under the State Energy Program. This approval predates the advent of ARRA.
- As acknowledged in the audit report, it is important to note that Florida undertook this action with the Department of Energy's (DOE) approval.
- It is important to consider that the Solar Rebate Program has been an acknowledged catalyst in the growth of the solar industry in Florida and the significant impact it continues to make on the State's economy.

Project Selection

- Florida has established a number of internal goals since the advent of ARRA. Internal goals were established in order to set priorities and organize the multiple tasks associated with allocating the increased amount of funding and are ever-changing. More important, and relevant to the discussion, is the fact that Florida is on track to meet DOE's goals for obligating funds.
- While Florida received initial approval of its overall SEP plan in July 2009, most of the individual programs remained in a "prohibited" status under the Special Terms and Conditions of the Agreement pending additional eligibility and environmental review.
- Unlike a number of states that have elected to focus on a few SEP programs, Florida has elected to pursue a broad portfolio of new programs that address a wide range of sectors. DOE representatives have previously endorsed this approach as furthering the "market transformation" that is a key element of SEP.
- The allocation of SEP funding is subject to the review and oversight of the Florida Energy and Climate Commission, established in 2008 under Section 377.6015 of the Florida Statutes.
- The Commission is a volunteer, part-time body that meets on monthly basis. The Commission is subject to Florida's rigorous Open Government and procurement laws.

- The Shovel-Ready Grants have proven challenging for all parties. Due to the nature of the projects, DOE and the State have engaged in extensive reviews. The evolving nature of ARRA's eligibility requirements has also had an impact. For example, one of the grant proposals was approved by DOE in October 2009, only to be reversed in December 2009.

Flow-Down Requirements

- Florida maintains that the majority of the flow-down requirements were contained in the agreement documents.
- As acknowledged by DOE, Florida has taken additional action to clarify the flow-down requirements within the agreement documents.

Internal Control Weaknesses

- The Florida Energy Office has historically had a small staff that necessitated some individuals to perform multiple duties specifically regarding the administration of the Solar Energy Rebate Program.
- The audit doesn't recognize the oversight roles performed by the EOG Administration Office and Florida Department of Financial Services who provide additional review prior to releasing funds.
- The addition of staff has enabled Florida to segregate duties, strengthen internal controls and significantly minimize the opportunities for fraud, waste and/or abuse of the funds.

Departmental Oversight

- Florida believes that it has an effective working relationship with DOE project officers and is committed to continuing to work with DOE staff to resolve outstanding issues and move forward.

The Energy Office is committed to its role of ensuring that the goals of the State Energy Program (SEP) and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act) will be met and accomplished efficiently, effectively and in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. If you have any questions regarding any of these issues, please do not hesitate to contact me at (850) 487-3800.

Sincerely,

Robert Vickers, Executive Director
Governor's Energy Office/Florida Energy &
Climate Commission

RV/gs

cc: Jason Kirkham, US Department of Energy Auditor in Charge
Kim Mills, Governor's Office of the Chief Inspector General

CUSTOMER RESPONSE FORM

The Office of Inspector General has a continuing interest in improving the usefulness of its products. We wish to make our reports as responsive as possible to our customers' requirements, and, therefore, ask that you consider sharing your thoughts with us. On the back of this form, you may suggest improvements to enhance the effectiveness of future reports. Please include answers to the following questions if they are applicable to you:

1. What additional background information about the selection, scheduling, scope, or procedures of the inspection would have been helpful to the reader in understanding this report?
2. What additional information related to findings and recommendations could have been included in the report to assist management in implementing corrective actions?
3. What format, stylistic, or organizational changes might have made this report's overall message more clear to the reader?
4. What additional actions could the Office of Inspector General have taken on the issues discussed in this report which would have been helpful?
5. Please include your name and telephone number so that we may contact you should we have any questions about your comments.

Name _____ Date _____

Telephone _____ Organization _____

When you have completed this form, you may telefax it to the Office of Inspector General at (202) 586-0948, or you may mail it to:

Office of Inspector General (IG-1)
Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

ATTN: Customer Relations

If you wish to discuss this report or your comments with a staff member of the Office of Inspector General, please contact Felicia Jones at (202) 253-2162.

The Office of Inspector General wants to make the distribution of its reports as customer friendly and cost effective as possible. Therefore, this report will be available electronically through the Internet at the following address:

U.S. Department of Energy Office of Inspector General Home Page
<http://www.ig.doe.gov>

Your comments would be appreciated and can be provided on the Customer Response Form.